



greg wasson

tabled indefinitely

The days of American populism are gone. Laws are still made in the liberal tradition, but the individual's power has been eroded. In political science terms, our form of government has become one of interest group liberalism. One voice is inaudible to most government agencies; it takes a number of voters complaining in concert to draw their attention.

The power of numbers is not only evident on the political scene in Washington and Salem, but right here at the University. Four law students took advantage of a low general turn-out and a large, compulsively assembled constituency to gain control of the Incidental Fee Committee.

First-year law-type Chris Moore won the election with less than 500 votes. He contends the student community has no reason to fear law-school control of the IFC.

"The only time you get into a bad

situation is when you have a small group that votes its interests to the detriment of the large group. We certainly haven't talked about doing anything like that. I know it's not my intention."

According to Moore, the number of would-be attorneys on the board poses no more of a threat to the ASUO than the disproportionate number of lawyers in the state and federal legislatures poses to their electorate.

ours

"The skills we're learning here are training us to do this sort of work. We're learning to deal with the kinds of controversies that can arise out of the political arena."

Apart from any threat perceived by the rest of the University (which Moore claims is groundless), he predicts that

legal involvement in the student government will have positive effects.

"It will allow us to mend some fences that break down at virtually every university where you have a large population of non-law students and a separate law facility. Bad blood develops."

Moore did his undergraduate work in Chicago, where he learned political slogans like: "Vote early, vote often," and "Why vote for free, when you can vote for me?" He therefore has little background in University politics but still offers this observation.

"Frankly, while there is no reason for other parts of the student body to be concerned, I think I would be worried (about) four people apparently from the same constituency (being) elected, if I were not a law student. It might inspire me to get involved in the future."

But this was not the first election in which an organized group tried to influence student elections. In 1977, Gary

Feldman became the first fraternity member to win the presidency in over 10 years. Feldman's election came despite efforts by the Inter-fraternity Council to swing victory to Feldman's opponent, Dave Tyler. The council's endorsement came in the form of an open letter sent to all Greeks urging members to vote for Tyler because he "is a lot more in tune with you."

However, the Greek's attempts went for naught. In contrast to this year's law school, they were unable to control the election. Their candidate lost. Moore attributes the difference to the personalities of the groups.

"It's representative of the law school's greater general political interest. It just seems to be a little more motivated."

This theory leaves us with an interesting political question: Has the trend toward usurpation of populist power by "motivated" interest groups become a reality in the ASUO?

yours

Vulgar report

After reading the Emerald article about the RCYB, all I could say to myself is: how disgusting. I'm sure I'm not in the minority when I think it's sad that news cannot be reported without using degrading and vulgar terms. Sure, you could say you're reporting the news as it happens. Giving the people the whole story. However, there are a lot of degrading things that go on every day. Everybody knows that. That doesn't mean they like to read about it every time they pick up the paper. It's also a poor reflection on the RCYB members who call themselves educated but then use the language of a non-educated person. This is college, remember?

I'm signing this: "tired of reading the filth."

N. King Goodfellow
senior, architecture

Dubious views

Greg Wasson has expressed a position ("Tabled Indefinitely," Oct. 16) which is increasingly popular of late, namely that the church seems to be floundering in a world of increasing secularism and that the "growing unrest in the shrinking ranks of the young church-goers" is going to make it difficult for the church to "scare the hell out of anyone anymore." While I admit to the evidence of this position, I believe Mr. Wasson uses some rather dubious conclusions in stating it.

1. "The idea that humans are basically weak and unable to devine (sic) adequate value systems of their own has allowed the church to maintain its conservative hold on the world." This is a rather humorous statement. There is little evidence that the church has any hold on the world, let alone a conservative hold. Consider the major powers of the world. If there is any influence on the U.S., U.S.S.R., China, Germany, Japan, England or any other, it comes from Exxon, General Motors, IBM and the like, not from the pope or Billy Graham. And even the pope's reaffirma-

tion of that church's traditionally conservative teachings on birth control, women in the church, homosexuality, divorce, etc. is largely ignored today and meets with open opposition and confrontation. To say the "church maintains its conservative hold on the world" is nothing short of ludicrous.

2. "Rather than prepare participants for the moral tribulations they are sure to face, the Catholic Church has saddled more than one emerging psyche with mental blocks — impeding an individual's painless development into a real person." In my 30-plus years I have yet to meet a person who has painlessly developed into a real person. I suggest that the majority of mental blocks which impede growth during the first 18 years of life are placed there, not by the church, but by the family and television. The church does not pass from generation to generation the sick idea that "niggers," "spicks" and "gooks" are inferior or to be scorned, or that death and violence are common to life between the hours of 7 and 10 p.m.

3. Speaking of the sister who plans to marry a non-Catholic: "Not only does my sister have to deal with the way she was trained, but she has to deal with the way her actions now affect our mother."

What is wrong with weighing the consequences of our actions and letting those consequences have a determining factor in the decision process? We are called the "gimeee-gimnee generation." We are so wrapped up in our personal wants, desires and needs that we have little consideration for the wants, desires and needs of others. We act on the basis of internal motivations with little (if any) thought given to external consequences. Yes, the church teaches us to consider the effect of our action on others. It is a shame that schools, families and employers do not attempt to instill more of that same basic concern for others.

4. "An accepted notion is that our generation, freed from concern of where the next meal is



coming from, has enjoyed increasing time to ponder the abstracts of existence" resulting in "a chance to dissect and examine the teachings of the church with a magnifying glass — denied to large segments of previous generations," and resulting in "a growing unrest in the shrinking ranks of young church-goers." Does Mr. Wasson really believe our generation spends more time "pondering the abstracts of existence?" The rising number of business and science majors tends to dispute this. The impetus for a closer examination of the church has come, not so much from the industrialization process, as from within the church itself. The wholesale reforms wrought as a result of Vatican II resulted from the church's realization that it must be a dynamic, continually changing and adapting institution if it is to have a place in today's world. There is an ecumenical and cooperative spirit in the dialogue among Christian bodies which almost daily results in more barriers, misconceptions and prejudices being cast aside.

If the church seems to be floundering, it is because it is struggling to discover (or perhaps rediscover) its mission. "Scaring the hell out of everyone" is the easy road, requir-

ing little thought, imagination or growth. But the church is in the process of moving from "scaring people out of hell" toward "loving people into paradise." It is the church's mission to care for people, find their frustrations, hurts and needs — then minister to them. In other words, Mr. Wasson, don't tell me to find a pain killer to make my church more comfortable for people. Rather, I suggest that you invest in a pair of eyeglasses to help you see that the church is alive and healthy, attempting to do precisely what its founder did a couple of millenia ago.

P.S. This year's Nobel Peace Prize winner has been announced just today. Carter? Sadat? Castro? The President of Harvard? No, merely a nun, Sister Theresa, who daily labors among the human misery in Calcutta, India. And I'm giving odds that her award will not be spent publishing her memoirs.

Dean McIntyre
graduate, music

Trains efficient

Numerous recent articles have outlined the activities of a number of countries to reduce the availability of oil and increase prices. It is now predicted that these actions will lead to a gas shortage this winter or spring similar to last year's. To date, government ac-

tion to deal with the situation has consisted mostly of finger pointing and long-term progress that will be of no help this year.

Oregon now has the opportunity to take action that will help out this winter and this spring. The Transportation Commission and the emergency board will review a proposal to add two more trains in the Willamette Valley with 80 percent of the cost paid by the federal government. Approval will help restore the mobility we lost when gas became unaffordable; the additional trains will make it convenient to take the train for most valley trips.

During last summer's shortage, trains and buses ran full in the valley. Although it was always full, the Seattle — Los Angeles train through Eugene could not be lengthened because there was not enough equipment to go around. The bus companies were also short of equipment. If the commission and the emergency board approve adding more trains now, that equipment will be here where we can use it. If they delay, the federal funding will be gone for a whole year and it will be just as hard to get a bus or train seat during the gas shortage this year as it was last year.

Timothy Wilson
law student

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